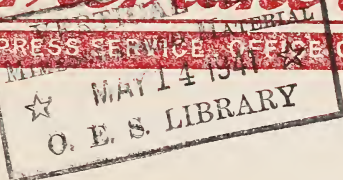


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BUYING MEAT BY GRADE

119
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"If Government-graded meat is available in the stores where you shop, it will pay you to know what the different grade designations mean," points out _____.

(Name) (Title) (Place)

"You can recognize meat that has been federally graded by a simple purple stamp," explains _____. "This stamp, on a large cut of meat, is repeated so many times that it resembles a ribbon of pale purple running along the side of a meat carcass. Also it is stamped so that the grade will appear on every retail cut. The grade stamp tells the quality rating that expert meat judges have given it. Besides this information, it also includes the initials of the Agricultural Marketing Service, the agency in charge of Federal meat grading. The stamp is of a harmless vegetable coloring, and it need not be removed before cooking."

Meat graded by the Federal Service includes beef, veal, and lamb. Grade names for the three are identical. Beef, of course, is graded in largest quantities.

From the top downward, the beef grades sold on the butcher's block are -- "prime," "choice," "good," "commercial," and "utility." Most of the "prime" grade beef goes to dining rooms and restaurants catering to a luxury trade.

Choice, therefore, is the highest grade of beef available for the most discriminating retail trade. Choice beef has a moderately thick covering of white or creamy white fat. The lean meat is bright in appearance, well marbled with fat.

To the ordinary shopper, the most apparent difference in the meat grades is in the amount of fat on the meat. The lower the grade, the thinner the fat coating and the less generous the marbling of fat. Marbling is the way meat experts refer to the tiny flecks and streaks of fat scattered through the lean.

"But, in buying meat by grade," _____ also points out, "the consumer should always remember that the grade does not reflect nutritive values. Every one of the grades can be a good buy if the homemaker knows how to get the best out of each by proper cooking.

"For instance, a top round or a rump steak from a choice grade of beef will be tender enough and have enough fat on it to make an excellent piece to broil. This same kind of steak from a commercial grade would be better made up into a Swiss steak with some added moisture. But, both make equally nourishing food, and both have good flavor."

